INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

**AFI PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION REGIONAL GROUP
FIFTEENTH MEETING (APIRG/15)**

(Nairobi, Kenya, 26 – 30 September 2005)

Agenda Item 4.3 :   **Air navigation issues – Air traffic Management (ATS, AIS, SAR)**
Agenda Item 5:   **Deficiencies in the Air Navigation fields**

SEARCH AND RESCUE (SAR) IN AFRICA – INDIAN OCEAN (AFI)

(Presented by the ICAO Secretariat)

SUMMARY
This working paper presents an update on the ICAO / AFCAC technical cooperation programmes in the field of Search and Rescue in the AFI region, and suggests that APIRG supports this project.
APPENDICES
• List of participating States • Saly Declaration on SAR funding

1   Introduction

1.1   Several air tragedies have sorely reminded the African aviation community how it was essential to have efficient search and rescue (SAR) systems in Africa. Yet, there are many shortcomings in that area in most African States.

1.2   In the light of the above, AFCAC and ICAO undertook in January 2002 to implement a large scale project in order to upgrade SAR services in Africa. Subsequently, the 14th meeting of APIRG (Yaoundé, Cameroon, 23 – 27 June 2003) adopted a conclusion (n° 14/58) on the ICAO / AFCAC search and rescue technical cooperation programme.

2   Project achievements and future activities

2.1   Evaluation missions

2.1.1   By August 2005, thirty seven States had requested a SAR evaluation mission, while twenty four evaluations had been completed. Eight more evaluation missions are planned for the second half of 2005. Hence, about thirty two States will have been evaluated by the end of 2005. The remaining States may not be evaluated for a few years, due to political instability.

2.1.2   The consolidated results of the first eighteen evaluated States have been analysed in-depth by the ICAO Air Traffic Management (ATM) section, documented and sent to all African States. Copies of this document, that should be updated by 2006, are available from the ICAO Secretariat.

2.1.3   The evaluations showed quite heterogeneous results throughout the Continent. A few shortcomings, however, seem to affect most evaluated States. These are, *inter alia*:

-        Lack of SAR exercises;

-        Insufficient staffing levels;

-        Lack of training;

-        Severe SAR funding deficiencies (no formal SAR funding mechanism in most evaluated States);

-        No quality control.

2.1.4   In terms of equipment, regulatory framework, international cooperation, situations vary greatly from one State to another.

2.1.5   When they receive the SAR evaluation report, States are encouraged to implement the report recommendations. Technical assistance is offered at no cost to them, should they consider that their expertise in the SAR field is not sufficient to implement all the recommendations without external assistance.

2.2   Technical assistance missions

2.2.1   So far, six States have requested a SAR assistance mission. Two States received an assistance mission, and two more such missions have been scheduled until the end of this year.

2.2.2   More requests for technical assistance are expected in the coming months and follow up missions are planned.

2.2.3   During the technical assistance missions, SAR documentation is produced, for instance:

-        Draft SAR bill;

-        Draft national SAR plan;

-        Draft terms of Reference for a National SAR Coordinating Committee;

-        Draft Agreement on Provision of a Civil Aeronautical Search and Rescue Service in a given SAR region (SRR) between the United Nations (UN) and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) of the State responsible for this SRR;

-        Draft operational plans for the RCC.

2.3   Training

2.3.1   The project training programme is based on SAR mission coordinator's courses, held in African training schools, in the French or the English language. So far, five courses have been held. Over 98 students from about 30 States / Organisations were trained.

2.3.2   In the framework of the project, technical support / expertise in the SAR field is also provided to African aviation training schools. The objective is to facilitate the emergence of training centres that would offer SAR training courses that would both meet the highest international standards and remain adapted to the specificities of the African environment.

2.4   Regional studies

2.4.1   Many factors seem to indicate that SAR services can be provided in a more cost – effective manner in Africa at the sub-regional level, which was recognized in the maritime SAR field by the Florence Conference. In the aviation sector, those factors include:

-          Relatively low level of activity;

-          Severe shortage of funds;

-          Existing regional cooperation structures (East African Community, ASECNA…).

2.4.2   To date, two groups of States (in Eastern and in Western and Central Africa) have signed regional agreements related to SAR. These States are still studying various ways and means to better cooperate at the sub-regional level in the SAR field. In the first case, regional agreements including a SAR component have already been signed at the Ministerial level. Their implementation is yet to be initiated. In the second case, operational agreements are already implemented. However, each State is currently responsible for the funding of its SAR services. The next step could be the establishment of a regional SAR funding mechanism.

2.4.3   A study could be subsidized by the project in the coming months, should the States formally express such a need.

2.4.4   The sub-regional cooperation processes may focus exclusively on funding aspects, or may include operational elements too.

2.5   SAR funding

5.5.1   A conference on the funding aspects of SAR was held in Saly-Portudal (Senegal) from 25 to 28 October 2004.

5.5.2   Over 120 participants from 50 States, international organizations and private companies participated in the Conference.

5.5.3   The final report is currently being finalized.

5.5.4   The conference adopted a declaration (see appendix 2) that summarizes essential high level SAR management principles that the participants unanimously supported.

2.6   SAR exercises

2.6.1   An important identified shortcoming was that evaluated States do not organize SAR exercises. This observation is all the more worrying as training is also a field in which shortcomings are serious and widespread whereas the low level of traffic in most African States generates a very low level of activity for African SAR systems (despite a proportionally higher accident rate in Africa – source : ICAO). In such conditions, even well trained SAR mission coordinators (SMC) may not be operational, should a major catastrophe occur several years after the SMC received SAR mission coordination training. Therefore, it was decided to establish a working group, composed of African and non-African SAR experts, to draft a detailed manual on the preparation of SAR exercises. This working group has been working by e-mail to date. The document to be drafted has been divided into several parts, each part being assigned to a group member. A formal meeting of the working group, during which the document will be discussed in detail by the working group, should be held by the end of 2005. The working group has been working in French so far. When the draft manual has been drafted in French, it will be translated to English, and widely circulated in both languages for comments.

3   Action suggested

3.1   The Meeting is invited to:

1.   Note the information presented in this working paper;

2.   Endorse the Saly Declaration on SAR funding;

3.   Adopt the draft conclusions presented in Appendix 3.

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Appendix 1 – participating States

ICAO / AFCAC Technical cooperation project

Search and rescue (SAR)

<u>Status report – participation of States (August 2005)</u>

	Eligible States	SAR evaluation requested	Evaluation completed	Assistance requested	Assistance provided
1	Algeria				
2	Angola				
3	Benin	✓	✓		
4	Botswana	✓	✓		
5	Burkina Faso	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	Burundi				
7	Cameroon	✓	✓	✓	
8	Cape Verde				
9	Central African Republic	✓	November 2005		
10	Chad	✓	✓		
11	Comoros	✓	September 2005		
12	Congo	✓	November 2005		
13	Côte d'Ivoire	✓			
14	Democratic Republic of the Congo				
15	Djibouti				
16	Egypt				
17	Equatorial Guinea				
18	Eritrea	✓	✓		
19	Ethiopia	✓	✓		
20	Gabon	✓	January 2006		
21	Gambia	✓	✓	✓	
22	Ghana	✓	✓		
23	Guinea	✓	✓		
24	Guinea Bissau	✓	February 2006		
25	Kenya	✓	✓		
26	Lesotho	✓	✓		
27	Liberia	✓			
28	Libya				
29	Madagascar	✓	September 2005		
30	Malawi	✓	✓		
31	Mali	✓	✓		
32	Mauritania	✓	✓		
33	Mauritius				
34	Morocco				
35	Mozambique				
36	Namibia				
37	Niger	✓	✓		
38	Nigeria	✓	✓		

	Eligible States	SAR evaluation requested	Evaluation completed	Assistance requested	Assistance provided
39	Rwanda	✓			
40	Sao Tome and Principe	✓	January 2006		
41	Senegal	✓	✓	✓	
42	Seychelles	✓	November 2005		
43	Sierra Leone				
44	Somalia				
45	South Africa	✓	✓		
46	Sudan	✓	✓	✓	✓
47	Swaziland				
48	Tanzania	✓	✓		
49	Togo	✓			
50	Tunisia	✓	✓		
51	Uganda	✓	✓		
52	Zambia	✓			
53	Zimbabwe	✓	✓	✓	November 2005

NB : both States (Sudan, Burkina Faso) that received assistance missions may request other assistance missions, since all requested assistance could not be provided in one week.

Appendix 2 – the Saly Declaration

Search and Rescue (SAR) funding Conference

(Saly-Portudal, 25 – 28 October 2004)

Conference Declaration

THE CONFERENCE

NOTING that the provision of assistance to aircraft in distress is a responsibility of all ICAO Contracting States under article 25 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention);

RECOGNIZING that States party to the Chicago Convention have the responsibility to rapidly and effectively respond to aircraft and persons in grave and imminent danger regardless of nationality, circumstance and location;

RECOGNIZING the economic and social benefits that can be derived from an efficient SAR system;

RECOGNIZING that implementing efficient SAR funding mechanisms is essential to significantly improve the overall efficiency of SAR services in Africa; and

REASSERTING the ICAO position that all that part of the services allocable to civil aviation of any permanent civil establishment of equipment and personnel maintained for the purpose of providing a search and rescue service should be taken into account in determining the total costs of air navigation services.

A.   CONCLUDES THAT:

1. Optimal organisation, management and regulation of SAR services has a profound and positive effect on the cost and the efficiency of SAR service provision.

2. In particular, the extent of required resources can be reduced if the following principles are applied:

    a) Implementing sound SAR needs assessment, based on risk;
    b) Signing and updating domestic and international SAR agreements;
    c) Implementing preventive SAR and appropriate regulatory measures;
    d) Using assets on a shared basis;
    e) Using staff on an incremental basis;
    f) Establishing regionalized SAR provision;
    g) Establishing joint aviation/maritime operational centres, possibly multi-functional; and
    h) Using volunteer organisations whenever available.

3. Yet, providing efficient SAR services requires the allocation of funds to provide for, *inter alia*, fixed coordination facilities (including communication equipment), personnel (including training), life support equipment (including droppable supplies) and SAR unit operating costs (for both actual operations and training exercises).

B.   THEREFORE RECOMMENDS THAT STATES SHOULD:

1. Further build Government awareness of SAR funding requirements;

2. Optimize the use of existing SAR equipment / facilities within a State / region as a means of major cost-effectiveness improvements.

3. Avoid duplication between aviation and maritime SAR systems within a State or a group of States by making efforts to harmonize aviation and maritime SAR policy, practices and procedures with a view, ultimately, to establishing joint aviation / maritime SAR systems.

4. Allocate sufficient resources to the training of SAR Coordinators and operational staff to build and maintain reasonable SAR efficiency within a State or group of States.

5. Allocate funds to the organization of SAR exercises for the improvement of the SAR system and reduction of lives lost in the conduct of live SAR.

6. Implement letters of agreement between neighbouring and proximate States.

7. Elevate SAR as a community service obligation.

8. Produce effective SAR empowering documentation.

9. Prescribe robust regulatory frameworks and properly structure their SAR systems in the context of well ordered and competently enforced aviation regulations in conformity with ICAO standards and recommended practises.

10. Establish, wherever technically and operationally appropriate, joint aeronautical / maritime rescue coordination centres or rescue sub-centres.

11. Explore all possible sources of funds for SAR activities, including air navigation charges.

12. Explore the establishment of sub-regional SAR systems from both an operational and financial perspective.

13. Explore the creation of a cooperative SAR funding mechanism at the sub-regional level.

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Appendix 3 – Draft APIRG/15 Conclusions on search and rescue

Conclusion … on search and rescue (SAR)

That States:

a) Participate in the ICAO/AFCAC SAR evaluation programme;

b) Implement the evaluation recommendations, when they have received a SAR evaluation mission, either with their own resources, or with the technical assistance offered by the project;

c) Organize regular SAR exercises;

d) Implement the SAR management principles adopted by the Conference on SAR funding held in Saly-Portudal (Senegal) from 25 to 28 October 2004 and reflected in the Saly Declaration on SAR.

Conclusion … on search and rescue (SAR) funding

The 15th meeting of APIRG endorses the Declaration on search and rescue (SAR) funding adopted by the Conference on SAR funding held in Saly-Portudal (Senegal) from 25 to 28 October 2004.

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